

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: MARR, MASS, TH

SUBJECT: DR. KISSINGER'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SFRC

1. THE WIRELESS FILES FOR SEPTEMBER 7, 10 AND 11 CONTAIN
TESTIMONY RELEVANT TO ASIA.

2. TRANSCRIPT OF HEARINGS REVEALS FOLLOWING SPECIFIC
REFERENCES TO THAILAND AND SEATO:

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 - NOTHING.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 - AN EXCHANGE WITH SENATOR
FULBRIGHT ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S CONCEPTION OF US POLICY
TOWARD SOUTHEAST ASIA:

SEN. FULBRIGHT: DOES THAT CONCEPT ENVISION OUR DIS-
ENGAGEMENT OF ALL OUR FORCES FROM THE AREA?

DR. KISSINGER: WELL, IT DEPENDS, MR. CHAIRMAN, ON WHAT
COUNTRIES YOU WANT TO INCLUDE IN THAT AREA. THE NIXON
DOCTRINE HAD ALWAYS ASSUMED, AND IN FACT IT HAD PRACTICED
THE GRADUAL REDUCTION OF AMERICAN FORCES AND THE SHIFTING
UNCLASSIFIED

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OF THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEFENSE TO THOSE COUNTRIES
PRIMARILY CONCERNED. WE ARE ENGAGED AT THIS MOMENT IN DIS-
CUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH
A VIEW TOWARDS THE GRADUAL REDUCTION OF OUR FORCES IN THAT

COUNTRY, AND WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN THIS PROCESS WITH A

WITHDRAWAL OF 3,500 TROOPS OR MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM THAT COUNTRY.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 - AN EXCHANGE WITH SENATOR AIKEN ON THE DISPOSITION OF US FORCES AROUND THE WORLD:

SEN. AIKEN: HOW MANY IN THAILAND?

DR. KISSINGER: IN THAILAND, I DON'T KNOW THE EXACT FIGURE, ABOUT 45,000.

AN EXCHANGE WITH SENATOR CHURCH ON RESIDUAL FORCE LEVELS IN ASIA AND THE NEED FOR GRANT MILITARY AID.

SEN. CHURCH: YESTERDAY, AND POSSIBLY TO SOME EXTENT TODAY, THERE HAS BEEN SOME EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE COMMITTEE AND YOU AND CONCEPTIONS OF FOREIGN POLICY FOR THE FUTURE, AND I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOUR CONCEPTION OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN ASIA MAY BE IN THE POST-WAR ERA, PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO THE CONTINUED MAINTENANCE OF AMERICAN MILITARY BASES ON THE MAINLAND. IS IT YOUR HOPE AND PURPOSE THAT WE MAY FIND IT POSSIBLE TO WITHDRAW ALL OUR REMAINING TROOPS FROM THE MAINLAND OF ASIA OR IS IT YOUR CONCEPTION THAT A RESIDUAL FORCE SHOULD BE RETAINED ON THE MAINLAND?

DR. KISSINGER: WELL, SENATOR, THE ONLY COUNTRY TO WHICH THAT APPLIES, UNLESS I AM MISTAKEN, YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT THE MAINLAND IS THAILAND.

SEN CHURCH: THAILAND AND KOREA.

DR. KISSINGER: THAILAND AND KOREA.

WE WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DEFENSE UNCLASSIFIED

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OF BOTH THESE COUNTRIES WITH ONE WHICH WE HAVE A TREATY IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES. IT IS OUR INTENTION THAT IF THE DETENTE DEVELOPS, AND IF THESE RETURNS TO SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA PROGRESS AS WE HOPE THAT REDUCTIONS, THAT SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS OF AMERICAN FORCES MAY BE POSSIBLE.

SEN. CHURCH: WELL, APART FROM FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN FORCES, WHAT I AM TRYING TO ELICIT FROM YOU IS THE LONG TERM OBJECTIVE OF AMERICAN POLICY IN ASIA. IS IT CONTEMPLATED THAT WE SHOULD MAINTAIN SOME RESIDUAL FORCE ON THE MAINLAND AS THE BRITISH OR THE DUTCH OR THE FRENCH USED TO DO IN ASIA, PERMANENT BASES OF SOME KIND FOR THE

OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF PRESERVING STABILITY OR SOME SUCH
OTHER PURPOSE.

DR. KISSINGER: SENATOR CHURCH, I THINK OUR POSITION, IT IS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE DUTCH, FRENCH AND BRITISH, WHO WERE THERE TO DEFEND IMPERIAL POSSESSIONS. OUR PURPOSE WHERE WE ARE IS TO SHORE UP THE CAPACITY OF INDIGENOUS COUNTRIES TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST THE DANGER OF OVERWHELMING ATTACK. TO THE DEGREE THAT THE DANGER IS REDUCED EITHER THROUGH FOREIGN POLICY OR THROUGH THE GROWTH OF INDIGENOUS STRENGTH, THE PRESENCE OF AMERICAN FORCES BECOMES UNNECESSARY. WE DO NOT HAVE FORCES THERE FOR ANY ABSTRACT PURPOSE OF CONSTITUTING A BRIDGE INTO ASIA FOR THE UNITED STATES AND, THEREFORE, I WOULD PREFER TO TIE MY ANSWER TO A STUDY OF THE SECURITY SITUATION THAT IS MY JUDGMENT THAT VERY SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS OVER A FIVE TO TEN YEAR PERIOD ARE PROBABLE.

SEN. CHURCH: CAN YOU FORESEE A TIME WHEN IT WOULD BE NO LONGER NECESSARY FOR THE REASONS THAT YOU HAVE INDICATED THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AMERICAN FORCES ON THE MAINLAND?

DR. KISSINGER: I WOULD SAY, FIRST, THAT WE HAVE NO ABSTRACT DESIRE TO MAINTAIN AMERICAN FORCES ON THE MAINLAND OF ASIA. I CAN FORESEE SUCH A TIME IF THE CONDITIONS I HAVE DESCRIBED CAN BE MET.
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SEN. CHURCH: DURING THE PERIOD OF THE COLD WAR IN ITS MOST INTENSE YEARS, AS YOU KNOW, WE DISTRIBUTED AROUND THE WORLD VAST QUANTITIES OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT TO SCORES OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. BUT EVEN IN MORE RECENT YEARS AS THE INTENSITY OF THE COLD WAR HAS TENDED SOMEWHAT TO DISSIPATE IN A SIGNIFICANT MEASURE BY VIRTUE OF YOUR EFFORTS, STILL THIS MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CONTINUES IN LARGE PART UNABATED. FOR EXAMPLE, DURING THE PERIOD FROM 1962 TO 1972, THE US PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE ABOUT \$28 BILLION DOLLARS IN MILITARY WEAPONS TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. AS YOU KNOW, THIS HAS BECOME A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE BETWEEN THIS COMMITTEE AND THE ADMINISTRATION, AND EVEN IN THE PRESENT BUDGET SOMETHING OVER \$1,300,000,000 IS REQUESTED IN GRANT AID FOR FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

I RECOGNIZE WITH REGARD TO KOREA WHERE THE PRICE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF OUR FORCES SEEMS TO BE THE MODERNIZATION OF THE SOUTH KOREAN ARMY, AND IN PLACES LIKE SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA WHERE IT IS THOUGHT THAT PAST POLICIES HAVE IMPOSED CONTINUING OBLIGATION, THAT A CASE MAY BE MADE FOR GRANT MILITARY AID. BUT IS THERE ANY LONGER A NEED, IN YOUR JUDGMENT, FOR GRANT AID TO COUNTRIES SCATTERED ALL

OVER THE WORLD OR FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF CONSPICUOUS
MILITARY ADVISORY GROUPS IN THE CAPITOLS OF SO MANY
NATIONS.

WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL VIEW, LOOKING AHEAD TOWARD THE
QUESTION OF GRANT AID, OF MILITARY HARDWARE TO FOREIGN
GOVERNMENTS.

DR. KISSINGER: WELL, SENATOR, YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER
THAT IN MY PRESENT POSITION I HAVE ADDRESSED PRIMARILY
ISSUES THAT REQUIRE PRESIDENTIAL ACTION AND, THEREFORE,
I HAVE NOT LOOKED AT EACH MILITARY AID PROGRAM IN EVERY
COUNTRY WITH EQUAL CARE. AND THEREFORE, I FIND IT DIFFI-
CULT TO GIVE YOU A CONCLUSIVE ANSWER RIGHT NO

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